

4. Comparison to other state library agencies

How many other state library agencies operate film and video services? What are the parameters of those services? Do they allow direct borrowing of films and videos from the state library or are users required to go through the public library? What are the plans for their agency's film and video service?

Five methodologies were used to gather data and information in order to evaluate the Film/Video Service. First, interviews were conducted with the Film/Video staff and with the members of the Commission's State Library Development Committee. These discussions helped shape the subsequent information and data collection efforts.

Second, the consultants examined existing data. Film/Video Services staff provided extensive data on the use of the service over time and the use by different categories of borrowers. Additional raw data were provided from a survey conducted by a committee of the North Carolina Library Association about public library audiovisual services.

Third, focus groups held with public library directors included the Film/Video Service as a discussion item. Five focus groups were conducted at five locations across the state. Focus group members were asked to discuss services provided by the North Carolina State Library. Three of the groups spontaneously mentioned the Film/Video Service. In two groups, the consultants raised the issue when it was not mentioned first by the groups.

Fourth, a survey was conducted of users of the Film/Video Service. The survey was sent to a random sample drawn from a list of users provided by the Film/Video Service.

Fifth, the consulting team solicited information about film/video service from 12 other state library agencies. The information was gathered through telephone interviews with state librarians.

Prior to the official survey and prior to and after the focus groups, the staff of the Film/Video Service, without authorization, solicited letters of support from users and portrayed the request as an official project survey. The consulting team could not determine whether these solicitations affected responses to the official project survey or discussions during the focus groups.

ANALYSIS OF EXISTING DATA - EXPENDITURES AND COLLECTION USE

This section provides information and an analysis of existing data on expenditures for the Film/Video Service and general use of the collection. Data show that:

- expenditures have declined 30 percent between 1989-90 and 1994-95;
- the combined requests for films and videos have declined 27 percent since 1989-90, and circulation has dropped 21 percent;